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REPORT

OPERATION ATTLEBORO

14 April 1967

HQ PACAF

**Directorate, Tactical Evaluation
CHECO Division**

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S.E. Asia Team

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
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1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED (From - To)	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE			5a. CONTRACT NUMBER		
			5b. GRANT NUMBER		
			5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER		
6. AUTHOR(S)			5d. PROJECT NUMBER		
			5e. TASK NUMBER		
			5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER		
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Department of the Air Force Headquarters Pacific Air Forces, CHECO Division Hickam AFB, HI				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT A -- Approved for Public Release					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT Project CHECO was established in 1962 to document and analyze air operations in Southeast Asia. Over the years the meaning of the acronym changed several times to reflect the escalation of operations: Current Historical Evaluation of Counterinsurgency Operations, Contemporary Historical Evaluation of Combat Operations and Contemporary Historical Examination of Current Operations. Project CHECO and other U. S. Air Force Historical study programs provided the Air Force with timely and lasting corporate insights into operational, conceptual and doctrinal lessons from the war in SEA.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS CHECO reports, Vietnam War, War in Southeast Asia, Vietnam War- Aerial Operations, American					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT	b. ABSTRACT	c. THIS PAGE			19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (Include area code)

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INTRODUCTION

For at least the last 20 years, the heavily forested area stretching to the northwest of Saigon has been a major communist base, supply and troop-staging complex. What have become known as War Zones C, D and the "Iron Triangle" have served these purposes for Viet Minh against the Japanese, Viet Minh against the French and, presently, for the Viet Cong against the Republic of Vietnam (RVN).

Until early 1966, this sanctuary complex, which was the known location of the Central Office South Vietnam (COSVN) and the main base of the Viet Cong (VC) 9th Division, was virtually inviolable. The 9th VC Division, comprised of the 271st, 272nd and 273rd Regiments, has been one of the most effective and feared VC forces in South Vietnam, having achieved an almost unbroken string of victories throughout II Corps prior to 1966. It was this division which combined two regiments, in December 1964, for the first multi-regiment VC attack of the war. This attack was directed against Binh Gia, a district capital in Phuoc Tuy Province, and was a complete success for the VC who temporarily overran the district capital and inflicted heavy losses on the Government forces. ^{1/}

The Michelin Campaign of late November and early December 1965 was the last major successful operation conducted by the 9th VC Division. During this campaign, the three VC Regiments ambushed and nearly annihilated the ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) 7th Regiment. Since that time the Viet Cong have not won a major victory throughout Vietnam, with the exception

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of the A Shau battle during March 1966.

Between these two major operations, there were many successful smaller attacks by these three regiments throughout III Corps during the spring and summer of 1965. The most significant victories were against Song Be and Dong Xoai, in Phuoc Long Province, although the VC did not escape without heavy casualties in both instances.

Early in 1966, the 9th VC Division moved from the vicinity of the Michelin Plantation, in Binh Duong Province, to War Zone D. It successfully avoided all major contact with Allied forces until March, when elements of the 173rd Airborne Brigade and the 271st VC Regiment came in heavy contact during SILVER CITY, an operation which accounted for 336 confirmed enemy killed in action (KIA) by body count, and an additional 200 VC estimated KIA. This was one of the most successful operations for U.S. forces to that time, with friendly casualties of 24 killed and 243 wounded. Not only did the VC suffer heavy loss of manpower but also a large quantity of supplies and equipment. ^{2/}

During Operation SILVER CITY, and immediately thereafter, it was believed that the remaining elements of the 9th Division were regrouping in War Zone C and further to the west in Cambodia in preparation for their monsoon offensive. To counter, the U.S. 1st Infantry Division initiated Operation BIRMINGHAM, in Tay Ninh Province, on the 24th of April 1966. The results were disappointing, with only 119 VC confirmed KIA or killed by air (KBA), and friendly losses of 56 KIA and 324 wounded (WIA). However,

[REDACTED]

the fact that the 1st Infantry Division was able to move at will through the heart of the Viet Cong base area was significant. It was in no small way that air support made this possible. ^{3/}

From early April until the unsuccessful attack on the Loc Ninh Special Forces Camp, on June 4th, the 9th VC Division effectively eluded all major contact. In the meantime, in response to a change in the intelligence situation, the U.S. 1st Division initiated Operation EL PASO II on June 2nd. This operation precipitated five major engagements, each initiated by the VC, indicating they felt they had a decided advantage in each case. Once again, air support - especially close air support (CAS) - was a decisive factor in at least three of the five major battles. The results were disastrous for the VC, who suffered a confirmed loss of 779 KIA and a probable loss of over 1,000 additional KIA. It took several months for the 9th VC Division to recover and it was at that time that Operation ATTLEBORO commenced, in a continuing effort to destroy the 9th Division and deny War Zones C and D, and the Iron Triangle to the Viet Cong. ^{4/}

When compared to the recent Operation CEDAR FALLS (largest to date and a significant contribution to the destruction of the Iron Triangle) even ATTLEBORO seems but a prelude to further operations. It can only be expected that such operations will continue until these areas are entirely denied the VC and the border in that vicinity is closed to further infiltration.

To quote Major General William E. DePuy, CG, 1st Infantry Division: ^{5/}

[REDACTED]

"This is the way we kill the VC around here. We find them, take two steps back, and let the Air Force kill them. Then we go pick up the bodies."

[REDACTED]

OPERATION ATTLEBORO

1. THE LOCATION

Operation ATTLEBORO, executed between 14 September and 26 November 1966, included in its area of operations (AO) the northern three-quarters of Tay Ninh Province. (That area north of a line drawn east and west through Tay Ninh City from the Cambodian border to the eastern boundary of the Michelin Rubber Plantation; north from there to the intersection of the boundaries of Tay Ninh and Binh Long Provinces with the Cambodian border. (See Fig. 1.) This area was approximately 40 miles east and west by 25 miles north and south and was bounded on the north and west by the Cambodian border. A small portion of Binh Duong Province was included in the southeastern corner of the AO.

The heaviest fighting took place in the southeast quarter of this area, approximately two to 15 miles north, and halfway between Tay Ninh City and the Michelin Rubber Plantation.

For the most part, this area is densely forested, with areas of cleared forest and brushwood in scattered patches throughout the heavy forest, and located along the Saigon River and its tributaries. A major area of fairly cleared land, interspersed with swamps, exists around Tay Ninh City and extends north and east, reaching almost to Dau Tieng which is located at the southwest corner of the Michelin Plantation.

[REDACTED]

2. THE STAGE IS SET

Initiated on 14 September 1966, Operation ATTLEBORO was a search and destroy operation against enemy forces, base camps and supply areas located in War Zone C. The 196th Light Infantry Brigade (Lt Inf Bde) was given operational control (OPCON) of ATTLEBORO, which also included units of the U.S. 25th Division and later the III Corps "Mike" Forces, who were Nung Chinese mercenary soldiers, usually led by U.S. Special Forces (USSF).

Through the end of October, action had been only light and sporadic, with no major contact with the enemy. Air support was provided but the light action was reflected in the fact that, between 4 October and 1 November, only two immediate and 140 preplanned air sorties were needed to support the operation. This was an average of only five preplanned sorties per day. ^{6/}

^{7/}

On 19 October, the operation was stepped up:

"The 196th was directed to go back into the area (west northwest of Tay Ninh) with a battalion to look for more rice and storage areas. One battalion went in and began to find some such areas and another battalion was brought in."

Meanwhile, the Viet Cong 9th Division was making preparations to launch a winter offensive. The division had completed resupply of its ammunition by September 30th and had been moving south into a prepared base area northwest of the Michelin Plantation. ^{8/} It appears their mission was to draw the 196th into battle near Dau Tien (Tri Tam) and defeat it on a field of VC choosing. This would serve as a major propaganda victory on

[REDACTED]

the eve of the U.S. Congressional elections and expose the entire area to the brunt of a Viet Cong offensive. The forces massing northwest of Michelin were in a good position to strike either the Soui Da Special Forces Camp, six miles to the west, or Dau Tieng, about 10 miles to the southeast. ^{9/}

Other VC units were moving into nearby positions to coordinate simultaneous attacks during the expected confrontation with the 196th Light Infantry Brigade. By 19 October, elements of the 272nd VC Regiment had begun to take up positions around Soui Cau, about 10 miles south of Dau Tieng, in preparation for an attack on 4 November. ^{10/}

On the 28th of October, the 1st Infantry Division, while conducting Operation SHENANDOAH, contacted the 3rd Battalion of the 273rd VC Regiment, about five miles east of the north end of the Michelin Plantation - just east of the ATTLEBORO area of operations. This action was heavily supported by air strikes and a forward air controller (FAC) reported VC losses due to these air strikes as 71. This effectively eliminated this unit from the support of other battalions of the 9th VC Regiment in the defense of their base areas during the hard fighting of the ensuing two weeks. ^{11/}

The 101st North Vietnamese Army (NVA) Regiment, however, was by that time moving south from bases near the Cambodian border to the build-up area where the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 273rd VC Regiment were deployed. The Commanding Officer of the 3rd Company, 3rd Battalion, 101st Regiment, captured on 8 November, revealed that his unit had left their base area on the 1st or 2nd of November and moved south, along the eastern boundary of ATTLEBORO, toward resupply camps. ^{12/}

[REDACTED]

By 30 October, the 196th Light Infantry Brigade and elements of the U.S. 25th Infantry Division were continuing sweeping operations near Dau Tieng but had now penetrated the fringes of this major Viet Cong build-up area and were threatening to disrupt the Viet Cong offensive plans, not to mention the possibility of uncovering the major VC base and supply area. On 31 October, 2/1 (2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment) located a major logistic base of B-160 Section, Group 82, COSVN Rear Service Department, and captured 843 tons of rice. This was a major blow to the Viet Cong logistic system in the area and could hardly be tolerated. ^{13/}

The stage was now set for a major confrontation between the 9th Viet Cong Division and U.S. forces in the jungles of War Zone C, a contest which was to precipitate, over the next two weeks, some of the heaviest fighting of the Vietnam war.

3. THE ACTION ESCALATES

On 2 November 1966, reacting to an intelligence report of a planned two-regiment attack against the Soui Da Special Forces Camp, the III Corps Mike Forces were moved by air from Loc Ninh to Soui Da to conduct combat reconnaissance. China Boy Three (3rd Mike Forces Company) was deployed by helicopter from Soui Da to a landing zone (LZ) about 10 miles to the north-east, on the afternoon of the second. ^{14/}

1st Lt. Robert M. Connelly, a 19th Tactical Air Support Squadron (TASS) forward air controller, put in three LZ preparatory (prep) air strikes to the north and northwest of their LZ. The enemy was in the vicinity as

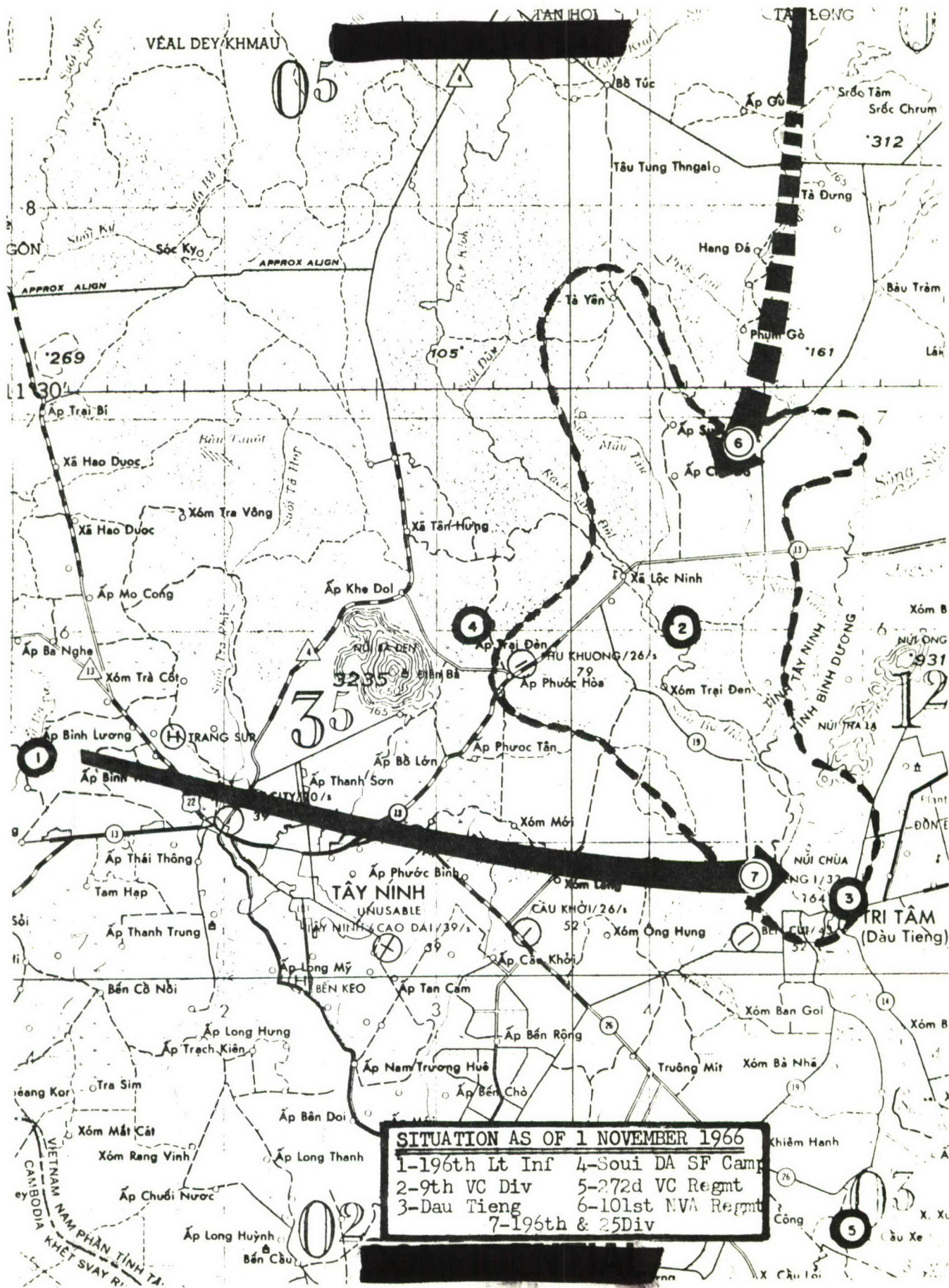


Figure 2

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evidenced by moderate ground fire in the landing area. One bullet hit and detonated one of Lt Connolly's white phosphorous rockets, used as a marker for air strikes, a few seconds after he had fired it from the wing tube launcher. China Boy Three continued to be supported by air strikes that evening and throughout the night. ^{15/}

On the morning of November 3rd, China Boy One was put into an LZ several miles to the south of China Boy Three's positions. At the same time, China Boy Three began moving north and had traveled about two and a half miles when, about noon, the company discovered a tunnel complex and fortified area. In the process of destroying it, they were attacked by an estimated company of Viet Cong. The Mike Forces called for air strikes and proceeded to beat off the attackers, inflicting 10 VC KIA (by body count) while suffering only three casualties themselves. One USSF and two Mike Forces were wounded in this action. ^{16/} The FAC, call sign Allen-06, put in nine air strikes on the Viet Cong, who were by then withdrawing to the north. ^{17/}

A short time later, at about 1815 hours, six miles to the south, China Boy One made contact with a VC platoon in a 15-minute fire fight. The VC withdrew, but another USSF soldier was wounded in action. ^{18/}

While the Mike Forces were reconnoitering and engaging the enemy to the north, another major battle was developing about eight miles further south. The 196th Light Infantry Brigade, and elements of the 25th Division, after discovering the large rice cache and supply center on the 31st of

[REDACTED]

October, had continued to search the general vicinity with few results other than sporadic sniper fire and small unit actions. However, on the morning of 3 November, when troops were deployed into two nearby locations, resistance stiffened. At about 1030 hours, "C" Company, 1st Bn, 27th Inf, 25th Infantry Division (C/1/27), encountered a dug-in enemy platoon about five miles east-southeast of the Soui Da SF Camp. The enemy put up a determined resistance, employing small arms, grenades and claymore mines. A/1/27 was dropped into a proximate LZ to support "C" Company and air strikes ^{19/} were requested on the enemy positions.

At about the same time, B/2/1 had gone into an LZ about two miles to the east and had also become engaged. A mile to the south of B/2/1, B/1/27 was uncovering a VC base camp with three tin buildings and miscellaneous ^{20/} tools.

Throughout the day and into the night, these four actions were supported by 18 strike sorties (13 F-100's, 3 A-1H's and 2 F-5's) enabling the ^{21/} U.S. forces to withdraw, reinforce and consolidate their positions.

4. THE VC OFFENSIVE IS LAUNCHED

At 0030 hours on November 4th, the 2nd Battalion of the 272nd VC Regiment initiated what was probably to have been the opening phase of the 9th Viet Cong Division offensive with a determined attack against the Soui Cau outpost, located four miles northeast of Go Dau Ha and 15 miles south of the 25th Division engagements of the previous day. A second outpost, ^{22/} 100 meters to the northwest, was also hit.

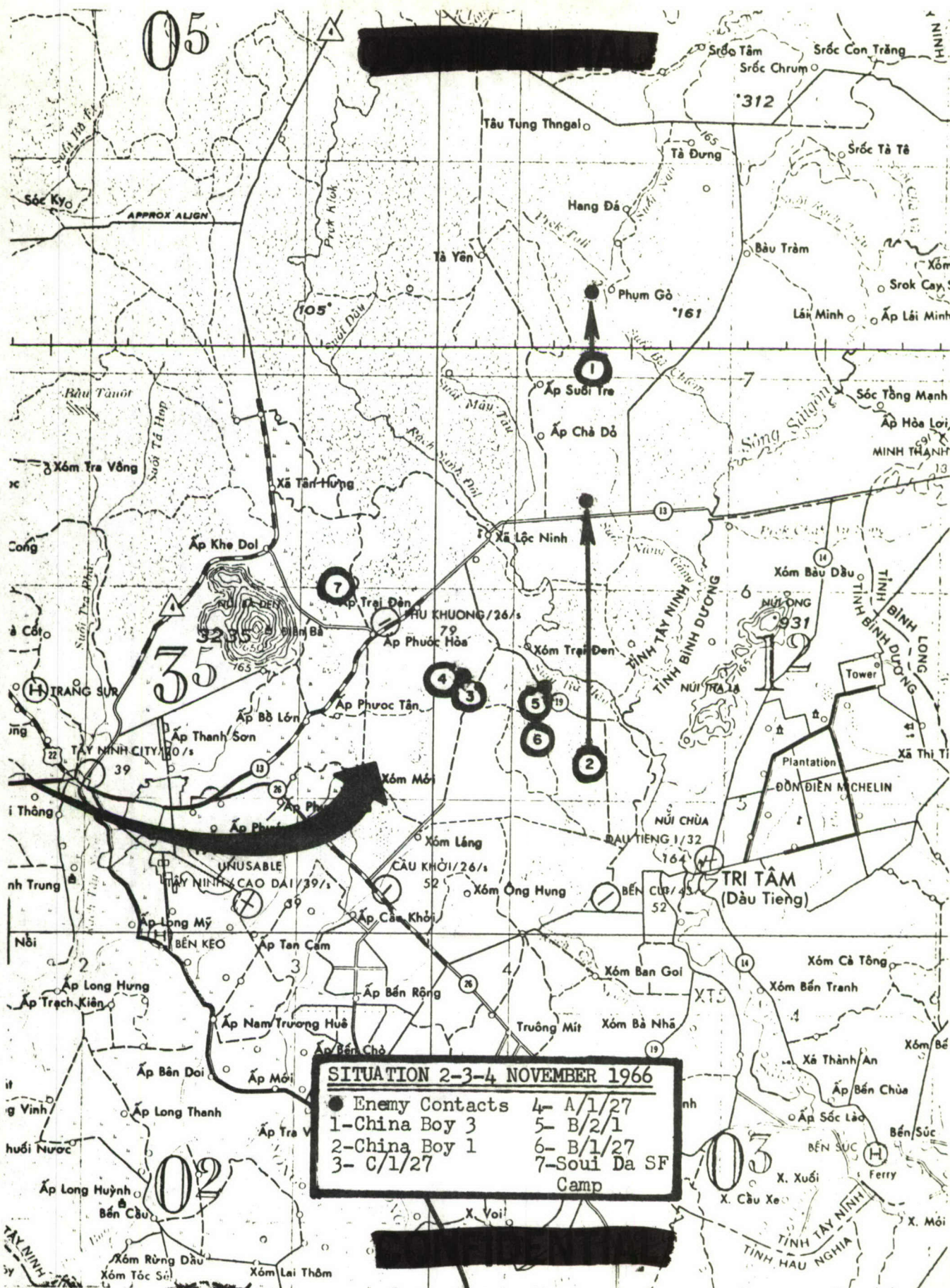


Figure 3

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The VC Battalion launched five major assaults against Soui Cau in the next two and a half hours. The defenders, the 309th Regional Force Company, were heavily supported by artillery, armed helicopters, an AC-47 which illuminated the battle area with flares until daybreak, and two air strikes. At 0515H, their last attack repulsed, the enemy withdrew, leaving behind 53 dead and five wounded to be taken prisoner, in addition to an extraordinarily large number of heavy weapons, indicating the disorder of their retreat. ^{23/}

The VC attack was not without some success. The second outpost was overrun and the defenders of both garrisons suffered a total of 26 Regional Forces (RF) KIA, 18 RF WIA, five civilians KIA and one 60mm mortar and 18 individual weapons lost to the enemy. ^{24/}

On the same night, while the attacks were in progress near Go Dau Ha, the Viet Cong launched a simultaneous mortar barrage against the base camp of the 196th Light Infantry Brigade, located about three miles west of Tay Ninh City. Between 0208 and 0230 hours, and again from 0540 to 0550 hours, the VC poured more than 150 rounds of 60mm and 82mm mortar fire into the camp. A USAF AC-47 was diverted to the camp and illuminated the area until dawn. Nevertheless, the attack was at least partially successful and U.S. losses were two KIA and 46 WIA. ^{25/}

The VC winter offensive had been launched, but events near Dau Tieng, the following day, were to have a profound effect on what was to follow as the VC were forced to stand and fight for their own base camps.

[REDACTED]

5. MIKE FORCE IN TROUBLE

On the early morning of 4 November, China Boy One, moving out of their night positions, ran into a minefield and suffered one killed and two wounded. A med-evac helicopter, called to evacuate the casualties, was downed by ground fire while enroute, losing one crew member killed. China Boy Two was committed to guard the downed chopper, which was later re-
26/
covered.

By the afternoon of the 4th, China Boy Three was in deep trouble. During the morning, the company again moved to the tunnel complex where they had engaged the enemy the day before, but again were unable to take it because of intense enemy fire. The Mike Forces broke contact and proceeded northwest a short distance to where they heard sounds resembling
27/
truck motors, generators and several chain saws.

The Mike Force promptly became engaged in a fire fight with the camp's occupants and attempted to withdraw southeast to their resupply LZ, calling in air strikes on the enemy camp and his pursuing forces as they departed. The VC, however, refused to break contact and pressed them all the way to the LZ, all the while keeping Mike Company under continuous
28/
fire from small arms, automatic weapons, 60mm and 82mm mortars.

By 1900 hours, China Boy Three had managed to resupply and had withdrawn a further three-quarters mile to the northwest, set up a defensive perimeter for the night, and proceeded to break down their supplies. While the Mike Forces were thus engaged, the VC launched a heavy assault in a

[REDACTED]

"U"-shaped formation. They advanced, using squad fire, and maneuvered up to grenade range where they reverted to individual action and inflicted heavy losses against the hard-pressed company. By this time it was almost dark, whereupon the enemy withdrew approximately 100 meters, surrounded the Mike Force, and continued to make contact. During the fighting of the last three hours, the Mike Forces reported a total of 50 VC KIA by body count. Now both sides settled down for the night's siege, with air strikes and artillery continuing to pound the enemy positions. ^{29/}

Forward air controller Allen-07 was scrambled after dark in his 0-1 to ^{30/} control the air support for the now desperate Mike Forces. In his words:

"When I first launched on the night portion, it was pretty hard to find them up there in an area where it was dark as hell . . . Without a flareship there, you go past Tay Ninh Mountain. It's just like driving into an inkwell. It's completely black and they don't dare to shoot up a flare for fear of giving away their position to Charlie...."

Once over the battle area, Allen-07 called in a flareship and began putting in air strikes. After the first strike, two F-100's went in; the ground troops gave the FAC an estimated count of 50 VC killed by air (KBA). (KBA is no longer officially recorded, and all battlefield losses are now reported as KIA. This makes the actual measure of the effectiveness of air support next to impossible.) ^{31/}

At 2300 hours, Allen-07 was relieved by Allen-08, who continued the air support until relieved by Allen-06. Neither of the latter two had ever controlled night air strikes before, but the air support continued. ^{32/}

[REDACTED]

Between 2048 hours of the 4th and 0625 hours of the 5th, these three FAC's spent six F-100 and four F-5 sorties around the beleaguered Mike Force positions. ^{33/} This in addition to three AC-47 sorties which, besides assisting in the flare support, expended 17,200 rounds of 7.62mm ammo on the enemy positions. The three AC-47 sorties, with two C-47 flareship sorties, kept the battle area lighted until daybreak with 254/10 (live/^{34/} dud) flares.

When Allen-07 returned to the area at 0530, the battlefield was quiet. China Boy Three planned to move out at dawn to another LZ as it would be impossible to bring helicopters into their current position due to the close proximity of enemy forces. But as dawn lightened the sky, the VC stormed out of their night positions and resumed the battle, employing ^{35/} the same tactics as those of the previous evening.

Allen-07 immediately put in two flights of F-100's, which he had been holding over Tay Ninh Mountain, followed by a flight of B-57's. At about 0730, SFC Heaps, the USSF leader of the company, screamed into the radio, "I'm hit!...All the Americans are either dead or wounded. We're being overrun!" That was the last radio contact anyone had with China Boy Three for the next 90 minutes. ^{36/}

From the air, the ground situation was confusing. Colored marking smoke was drifting up among the trees in the battle area so two armed choppers went down to have a look - and were promptly shot up. The VC were apparently detonating smoke canisters taken from the bodies of the fallen Mike Forces in an effort to lure aircraft within effective firing

[REDACTED]

range.

It wasn't until 0900 hours that the remnants of China Boy Three were finally located, about 1300 meters southwest of their overrun positions. They had detonated smoke grenades, which had been observed from the air, 38/ but these had been mistaken for another VC trap:

"We figured they were grenades that the VC had picked off the bodies of the company and were trying to decoy us in . . . As it turned out, it wasn't. It was the remainder of the company, approximately 80 some men...."

Meanwhile SFC Heaps had lost consciousness from his wounds and when he finally came to, Sgt. Hunt, also wounded, was administering first aid to him. The two Americans, with two Nung Chinese (one of them wounded), began to walk toward a landing zone. The going was slow and rough, with the two Americans often fainting. Finally, SFC Heaps was forced to leave Hunt, who could go no further, with one of the Nungs, and eventually made 39/ it to the LZ, where he again lost consciousness.

A med-evac helicopter came in and extracted the wounded, leaving the radio with the remaining Chinese. This left the team without effective radio contact as none of the FAC's spoke Chinese. The problem was resolved by taking one of the Chinese company leaders up in a helicopter so he could direct the remnants of China Boy Three in the proper direction to regroup with China Boy One and Two. 40/

After all elements finally linked up, they moved to an LZ where the final extraction was made late the same afternoon. The FAC's remained in

[REDACTED]

the air until the last man was extracted, then returned to their base at Tay Ninh West. ^{41/}

That afternoon, Brig. Gen. James F. Hollingsworth, vice commander, 1st Infantry Division, landed at Tay Ninh and presented the three FAC's (1st Lt. Connelly, Capt. Melby and Major Dorrah) with the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Bronze Star with Valor, for the support they provided the Mike Forces. ^{42/} On 28 November, Lt. Connelly was also submitted for the Silver Star by the Commander of the 19th TASS. The citation, in part, ^{43/} reads:

"As a direct result of his outstanding efforts, the unfriendly forces were dealt a severe blow and friendly casualties were held to a minimum. By his gallantry and devotion to duty, Lt. Connelly has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force...."

The total losses for the Mike Force action were 149 Viet Cong KIA and an additional 345 possible. The USSF estimated that 400 of these possibles were killed by air. Friendly losses were one USSF KIA, three WIA, one missing in action (MIA), 39 Mike Force KIA and 30 WIA. ^{44/}

6. CONFRONTATION

Following the initial contact on the 3rd of November, the elements of the 196th Light Infantry Brigade and the 25th Infantry Division again began cautiously probing the same general area on the morning of the 4th. At 1303 hours, C/2/27 Inf stumbled into a complex of approximately 35 enemy bunkers - all occupied. The VC opened up with heavy fire and "C" Company reported that 100 VC sprang out of their bunkers and rushed them.

[REDACTED]

The members of "C" Company cut them down, inflicted heavy losses, and drove them back into the bunkers. Air and artillery were called for and within 45 minutes C/3/21 Inf linked forces with C/1/27 at the contact point.

Now that the enemy had been exposed, every effort was made to cut off his escape and force him to fight. C/2/27th began sweeping in from the east, while A/2/27th was dropped into an LZ to the west. H/1/27th then took up a blocking position to the north, hoping to encircle the estimated VC regiment. The enemy again stormed out of their positions and were again driven back with heavy losses. ^{45/} However, during the maneuvering C/2/27th had gotten into a jam. The company found themselves pinned down and cut off by the VC bunkers and machine gun nests. ^{46/}

By 1530, the FAC (Issue-33) was putting in a flight of F-100's and holding another to follow. At this point the enemy broke contact and withdrew, while the FAC put in the second flight of F-100's and a flight of F-4C's. Ground forces reported finding 40 VC bodies in the immediate area of the battle and more were discovered later. In addition to these losses, A/4/31st, while moving to reinforce the engaged companies, located and captured 160 tons of loose rice and 55 tons in bags. ^{47/}

At 2100 that night, C/2/27th made heavy contact with the VC force which was probing their positions. A/2/1st Inf moved out immediately in an attempt to reinforce. By now it was evident the U.S. forces had been challenged over the past two days by a major Viet Cong force, later identified as the 1st and 2nd Battalions, 273rd VC Regiment and C-95 Company (Recon) of the 9th VC Division. ^{48/}

[REDACTED]

Meanwhile, the battle continued to build up. A request for a tactical emergency airlift of 2/18th Inf had been approved and this unit was preparing to leave Dau Tieng for the battle area to relieve elements of 1/27th and 2/27th, which had been in heavy contact.

By 0900 hours, the next morning, the 1st Infantry Division had taken operational control of ATTLEBORO as troops began to flood into the operational areas. In addition to 2/18th, 2/16th moved to the vicinity of Dau Tieng and A/3/21st Inf had moved from Loc Ninh into the same area. ^{49/} How this occurred and what was to follow were described by Maj. Gen. Frederick C. Weyland, commanding general, II Field Forces, Vietnam: ^{50/}

"The action that kicked off then, I attribute to Mueller. There was no specific information to go on, but Dutch had a feeling that we should bring more into the operation. The Mike Force was called in and landed in the northern part of the area and had heavy contact. Bill (Gen. DePuy) put a battalion in and then a reinforced brigade. He moved units all night and within 18 hours had the bulk of his division concentrated in the vicinity of Dau Tieng. I gave Bill an area and he started on search and destroy operations. It was fortunate he moved so fast. The 1st Division assisted the 196th get straightened out. The 196th did a splendid job in getting the enemy to show his hand. The whole operation built up from the initial meeting engagement of the 196th . . . General Westmoreland directed the location of the 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division. The 173rd, with one of its battalions and two Vietnamese Ranger Battalions, was used initially to screen along the river in the eastern part of the area of operations and then went into a search and destroy operation. The Sigma Teams took over the screening operations. The 25th Division on the left protected Bill's flank"

By the early morning of the 5th, the 273rd VC Regiment was once again

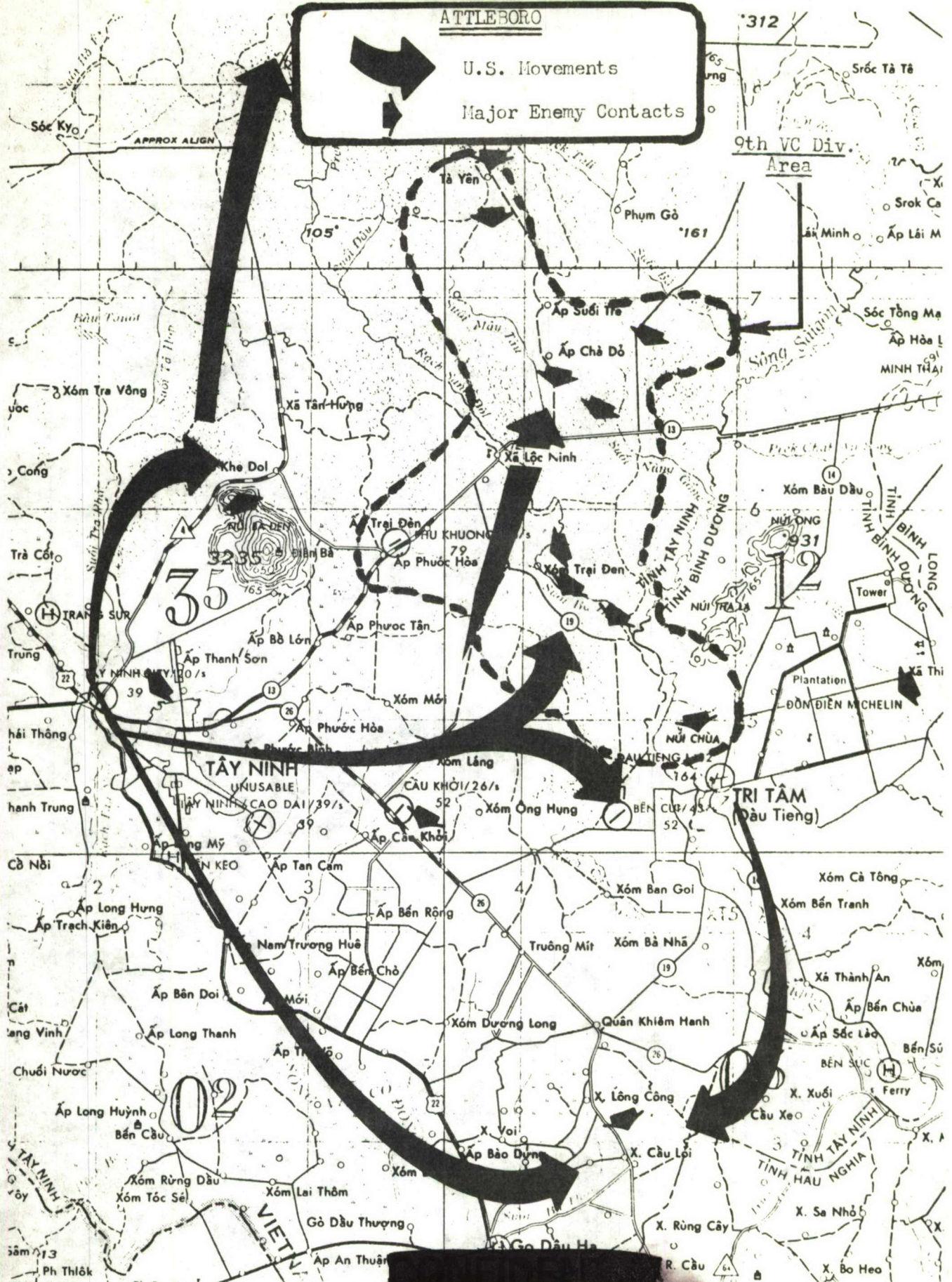


Figure 5

[REDACTED]

contacted, this time by A/2/27th. Within two hours, A/1/27th was under attack by about 35 VC; elements of 4/31st Inf were also in contact and 1/27th Inf was in the process of repulsing three separate attacks. By 1135 hours, 1/27th reported 35 VC bodies lying in front of its position. Repeated air strikes supported these actions and continued through the day as the fighting varied from moderate to heavy. ^{51/} On 5 November, 34 immediate strike sorties were flown in support of the U.S. units engaged in ATTLEBORO, while the Mike Force (overrun early in the morning) received an additional six. Four SKY SPOT (radar positioned and controlled) sorties were flown as were three AC-47 sorties, which provided flare and fire support during the hours of darkness. ^{52/}

By nightfall, the American forces had received only light casualties, while the three-day toll of the 273rd VC Regiment and C-95 Company stood at 163 KIA/KBA. ^{53/}

7. UNIDENTIFIED CONVOYS

At 1940 hours the night of the 5th, a counter-mortar helicopter of the 25th Infantry Division was on a mission 15 miles south of Tay Ninh, near the Cambodian border, when its crew spotted some unusual night activity. An unidentified convoy of 50-60 vehicles, apparently coming out of Cambodia and headed east toward Go Dau Ha, was stalled on the border. An AC-47 was diverted to the area, as well as helicopter gunships. Artillery and a mechanized company at Go Dau Ha were also alerted.

At 2110, it was reported that the vehicles had apparently pulled off

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Highway 1, on the north side of the road. A light fire team, equipped with searchlights, was unable to locate the convoy but did detect bicycle traffic moving back across the border into Cambodia. One of the 1st Division aircraft reported receiving .50-caliber fire. ^{54/}

Another strange incident occurred the following night. In the ATTLEBORO area of operations an Army Mohawk (Hawk-09) observed a 30-vehicle convoy - with lights on - traveling south along a small road just a few miles inside the Cambodian border. This occurred near Katum, almost 40 miles north of the previous incident. As the aircraft passed overhead the lights went out, but numerous other lights were reported in an area five miles to the northwest and almost directly on the Cambodian border. Just to the east, and also near the border, another 15-20 vehicles were observed. The lights of this convoy remained on, even when the aircraft passed overhead. Hawk-09 reported moderate ground fire from all three locations. ^{55/}

Spooky-41, an AC-47, was immediately diverted and four F-100's were scrambled from Bien Hoa. The Army also dispatched armed helicopters to the scene. By the time the strike aircraft arrived in the vicinity, however, all lights had disappeared and the trucks had probably pulled off the road to hide under the thick jungle canopy. After two hours, the F-100's were forced to return to Bien Hoa, unexpended. ^{56/}

8. THE SEARCH CONTINUES

On the early morning of the 6th, 2/29th Inf went into an LZ a short

[REDACTED]

distance from where the Mike Force was overrun the previous day. When contact developed, Hussy-34, the FAC, put in two air strikes. ^{57/} Meanwhile, only a mile to the east another FAC (Capt. Ralph F. Wetzel) was beginning to prep an LZ for 2/28th Inf. The preparation went normally, without noticeable enemy reaction. About 15 helicopters entered the LZ from the north and put the troops in. As they broke out to the southeast, the troops came under fire from a heavily wooded area. A fire fight ensued, which progressed until the "whole area was a mass of smoke." ^{58/} What occurred next was described by Capt. Wetzel: ^{59/}

"Fortunately I had a pre-plan coming on station right at the same time. Silver (Silver-51) showed up and was just overhead as this mass of smoke started coming up. They were the first flight on this heavy concentration of automatic small-arms fire."

Capt. Wetzel, following the directions of the command and control helicopter, began to put the strike on the largest concentration of fire: ^{60/}

"It was next to a tree line, but really all it was was a differentiation between a large canopy of trees and maybe a hundred feet beneath that, a shorter canopy of trees. There was a definite line there and a little break in (it)...(with) a .50-caliber in there...We put some bombs and napalm in there...."

As the Number 3 was making his bomb run, Capt. Wetzel first noticed some .50-caliber tracer coming up from a position to the east of the original target: ^{61/}

"I started to bring the flight on that position and all of a sudden the flight started seeing this...They saw flashes from 8,000 feet!"

[REDACTED]

"After they pulled up and downwind, they said, 'I've got it.' and they could see clearer than I could. They kept their eyes on this and used their own judgment...They could keep their eyes on the flashes which was best because some of this was out in the middle of the jungle. The automatic weapons must have had a real limited field of fire because it was coming right out of the trees. However, it was fairly effective. Number 2, Ken Backus, picked up a hit coming in on a strafing pass."

Silver-51, from Bien Hoa, on arriving over the target, had been informed that the friendlies were pinned down by automatic weapons fire and, ^{62/} under control of the FAC, began to make their bomb runs.

They made two passes and then, according to Lt. Backus, the Number 2 ^{63/} of the flight:

"On the third pass I dropped a high-drag (bomb) as I was approaching the target. Over the target and pulling off, I noticed heavy...red tracers criss-crossing in front of the aircraft and over the canopy. I called out to the rest of the flight, 'Silvers, watch it, we're getting heavy tracers from both sides.'...In the meantime...we went up to strafe...the tree line where the heaviest ground fire seemed to be coming from. We had each made one strafe pass and I was on my second, (in) a 30-degree dive (at) between 450 and 500 knots, just walking it (the 20mm) right down the tree line. As I started to pull off, the fire warning light came on...I pulled off and turned to the right where I knew friendly troops were and somebody started screaming 'You're on fire! You're on fire! You're trailing heavy smoke.'"

Since the aircraft was still flying, Lt. Backus elected to stay with it and headed off in the direction of Tay Ninh Mountain. At about 5,000 feet the fire light went out, but the flight control system fail-light came on and the aircraft went into a roll, the control frozen. At this

[REDACTED]

point Lt. Backus bailed out. ^{64/}

While he was still in the air he communicated, by survival radio, with one of three helicopters which was circling him. Meanwhile, two fighters were arriving for air-cap. As he hit the ground a helicopter landed nearby. Lt. Backus released his chute and ran to the helicopter. "About the time I got there, some guy came hobbling out and said 'Welcome aboard,' and stuck out his hand - and there was General Dean of the Army...." ^{65/}

Brig. Gen. John R. Dean, Jr., vice commander of the 1st Infantry Division, was flying over the battle area in his UH-1B Huey when Lt. Backus bailed out: ^{66/}

"I saw the chute and circled this kid until he got on the ground. The minute he hit, I hit the ground beside him with my helicopter. He jumped right aboard and we pulled him out. We like to take care of these boys who are supporting us...."

Back at the battle scene, Capt. Wetzel put in another strike and was then relieved by Hussy-24, Capt. Dan Phillips, who put an additional 10 air strikes into the enemy positions. Capt. Phillips said: ^{67/}

"After we had put in five to six of the air strikes, we'd have a two to three minute delay between flights. The VC would open up with their small arms and automatic weapons again, including at least one .50-caliber... Upon the roll-in then, of the next flight, the firing would immediately cease and they would go back in their holes until that flight was over. Then they would come out and fire a few more rounds until I could get the next flight in...."

Later in the afternoon, Capt. Phillips was again relieved by Capt. Wetzel. During his two missions, Capt. Wetzel estimated that he heard

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"between 80 and 100 rounds go whizzing by" and picked up a .50-caliber hit in his right flap. ^{68/}

The enemy fire tapered off gradually as air strikes continued to be put into their positions.

Although most of these air strikes went in about a mile from the actual LZ, in an area that was not searched for some time, 128 enemy KIA/KBA were reported for this action. There can be no doubt the enemy suffered serious losses from the more than a dozen air strikes on their positions during this action. ^{69/}

Several more LZ's were put in around the same vicinity during the day, as the Army prepared for a major sweep of the area. Several enemy base and supply areas were discovered here as well as a short distance to the south where the major action of the 4th and 5th of November had taken place. ^{70/}

9. THE FINAL SHOWDOWN

Between the 3rd and the 6th of November, the American forces found 423 VC bodies on the battlefield, and many more were to be discovered later. Two of the enemy had been captured and hundreds more probably killed, but carried away and never found. Friendly losses for the same period were 77 KIA (39 of these were Mike Forces), 211 WIA (including 30 Mike Forces) and five missing in action. ^{71/}

On the 7th, action tapered off to sporadic contacts and it appeared the Viet Cong had finally begun to withdraw from the conflict. During

[REDACTED]

the morning the 1/28th Inf discovered 70 VC bodies, probably killed by previous air or artillery strikes. A battalion-size bunker complex was also uncovered during the day by C/2/1st Inf. ^{72/}

Throughout the day 1/28th Inf continued to sweep the same general area, searching for base camps and signs of the mysteriously vanished enemy. At nightfall, they bivouacked in an LZ only a mile from the positions where the Mike Force had made its desperate stand only two and a half days before. The troops knew they were not far from the large enemy base camp which China Boy Three had stumbled across on the 4th. ^{73/}

The bivouac itself was in a large area of elephant grass, surrounded by a thick wall of jungle. The grass, 20-30 feet high, had been burned off at the northern end of the clearing. The LZ was located in the burned-off portion, the northern edge of which was only ten feet from the jungle's edge. The battalion set up a defensive perimeter and dug in for the night. ^{74/}

This is what the enemy had been waiting for. During the night, the 2nd Battalion, 272nd VC Regiment, and the 1st Battalion, 101st NVA Regiment, slipped through the jungle and took up positions around the unsuspecting American unit, and waited for the dawn.

Maj. Doyal L. Wyrick had wakened early on the morning of the 8th. The 1st Division liked to have an Air Force FAC in the air early because of the frequent VC tactic of dawn attack. By 0615 hours, Maj. Wyrick was airborne over the area in his O-1, trying to pick out the quiet troop positions of the various units in the early morning light. Below, the two Viet Cong

[REDACTED]

battalions awaited the signal to charge. At 0624 it came. ^{76/}

The VC stormed through the jungles and hurled themselves against the northwest perimeter of the bivouac. Firing spread simultaneously down the west line of the perimeter. The U.S. battalion sent out an immediate call for air support and, within minutes, four F-100's which had been on five-minute alert were streaking down the runway at Bien Hoa and winging north toward the embattled battalion. ^{77/}

In the meantime, the first VC attack had been met with a devastating hail of fire from the dug-in American positions. Seventeen minutes after the first attack, a VC company tried to storm the southeast defense perimeter but were hurled back in bitter fighting. As the VC began to pull back, the first two F-100's arrived on target and Maj. Wyrick, who had by then been joined by Capt. Wetzel, began to put them in. ^{78/}

Within minutes, a second VC company charged through the jungle from the northwest and fell on the U.S. positions. As the troops on the ground continued to fight for their lives, the two FAC's supported them with incessant air strikes all along the perimeter. Capt. Wetzel later recalled: ^{79/}

"We put the bombs out 200 feet in the jungle, although that was within the envelope of hitting the friendlies. But they were landing in the jungle (and) the fragmentation wasn't going to get to the troops. We put napalm in a little closer, the CBU (cluster bomb units) a little closer than that, and the 20mm right in the tree line."

For another 90 minutes, the VC continued the attack. Finally, before the combined massed firepower of the dug-in American battalion and the air

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strikes, the VC ranks broke and they were forced to withdraw, leaving the camp perimeter and the surrounding jungle littered with 324 of their dead, many of whom were the result of the 43 air strikes which, according to the Army, "saved the day." ^{80/}

Even in defeat the enemy managed to recover most of their weapons and probably many of their dead. As the U.S. forces swept the battle area, only 26 VC carbines, two PP-46 light machine guns, two B-40 anti-tank grenade launchers, assorted ammunition, and a few documents were found among the ^{81/} heaps of dead. American losses in the battle totaled 20 KIA and 44 WIA.

Army units continued to go into nearby LZ's throughout the day and on at least one occasion air strikes prevented a major disaster. A 3rd Brigade, 1st Inf Div, FAC began preparing an LZ with two B-57's (Yellowbird Flight). The aircraft laid their 1,000-pound bombs all around the LZ and uncovered numerous trenches and bunkers. When the Army finally went into the LZ, ^{82/} they reportedly discovered nearly 100 VC bodies killed by the bombs.

The last major Viet Cong offensive effort during ATTLEBORO was finished, but much of the fruits of their hard-won victory lay yet before the advancing U.S. forces.

10. THE AFTERMATH

On the same morning, 2/16th Inf, sweeping in the area of the heavy contact by U.S. forces on the 4th and 5th, discovered 22 VC bodies, clad in khaki uniforms, in fresh graves. In the same area, 1/16th Inf discovered an 80-bed VC hospital. Later in the day, 2/28th Inf began to uncover the

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reason for the fanatically determined enemy attack of that morning. Only a few hundred yards from the battle area, an extensive tunnel complex, which contained eight sub-machine guns, 11 Chicom machine pistols and thousands of grenades of various types, was unearthed. ^{83/}

The 8th of November also marked the first use of B-52's in support of Operation ATTLEBORO. Over the next 17 days, more than 200 B-52 sorties were to expend a total of over 4,000 tons of ordnance on the jungles of War Zone C. The results of this continuous bombardment, in both physical and psychological damage to an already badly beaten enemy, will probably never be known. ^{84/}

That night, a reeling but still viable enemy managed a small retaliation for their day's losses by placing three mortar rounds on the base camp of the 3rd Battalion, 1st Inf Div, southeast of the ATTLEBORO area of operations. However, only six U.S. personnel were wounded in the attack. ^{85/}

On the 9th, troops of the 1st Division continued to move into the base camp complex which the two VC battalions had defended so dearly. A Viet Cong regimental headquarters, which included a nearby mine factory, was uncovered. Captured were 450 claymore mines and a great quantity of other supplies and equipment. In one large tunnel, and scattered nearby, 95 VC bodies were discovered. ^{86/}

While American forces were busy overrunning the enemy stronghold, a fantastic quantity of men, ammunition, artillery and supplies were being poured into the battle area from all over the southern half of Vietnam, in

[REDACTED]

what was to be the largest tactical emergency airlift operation of the war. Twin-engined C-123's and giant four-engined C-130's were landing continuously at Tay Ninh and the forward base airstrips. This tremendous effort was, for the most part, responsible for the build-up in American forces in such a short time. Once the enemy committed himself to battle, the entire area came under a virtual deluge of men and equipment, brought in by airlift. The value of quick deployment of forces was amply demonstrated during the crucial battles of the previous few days. ^{87/}

On November 10th, Capt. Don Phillips (Hussy-24) was preparing an LZ for 2/16th Inf, when a flight of fighters made a direct hit on a VC base camp. The 500-pound bombs uncovered numerous foxholes and several hundred yards of trenches belonging to the 101st NVA Regiment and saved one platoon from walking into a trap, which would have almost certainly meant their annihilation. Capt. Phillips stated that "the battalion commander personally ^{88/} said that air saved the platoon from being annihilated by the VC."

On the action, Maj. Gen. William E. DePuy, CG, 1st Infantry Division, ^{89/} commented:

"A company of the 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry, went in just north of the 196th Brigade after a 30-minute preparation and killed 20 enemy in the first 15 meters off the LZ. Many others were found dead in surrounding bunkers. The company could not have gotten off the LZ had it not been for the preparation beforehand...."

At 2040 hours the same day, an ambush patrol from 2/28th Inf ran into what appeared to be tear gas. The patrol donned gas masks and moved forward,

[REDACTED]

but made no contact. Four soldiers were taken under observation for gas exposure, but no lasting effects were noted. On November 8th, the first ^{90/} Chicom gas grenades of the war had been captured in a VC ammunition dump.

Action on the 11th remained fairly insignificant during the day. A few VC were killed in scattered clashes and 14 bodies were found from a previous action. Numerous weapons and equipment were captured and another base camp discovered. Two warehouses and a truck were found destroyed in the area of a previous air strike. A camp was also found by B/2/16th Inf, containing two storage warehouses and several small bunkers. Air strikes ^{91/} were called in to destroy the fortifications.

During the night, the Viet Cong staged two major mortar attacks against the supporting base camps for ATTLEBORO. The Viet Cong dropped 84 rounds of 81mm mortar fire on the 25th Division/196th Brigade base camp at Tay Ninh, inflicting three U.S. KIA and 24 U.S. WIA. This was coordinated with an attack against the 1st Division base camp at Dau Tieng, where approxi- ^{92/} mately 65 rounds of 82mm mortar fire inflicted 17 U.S. WIA. AC-47's flew flare support for the Tay Ninh camp and expended 3,100 rounds of mini- ^{93/} gun ammunition, with unknown results.

From this attack until the end of the operation, no further major contact was developed with the enemy. Many base camps and supply areas continued to be discovered, with tremendous stores of enemy equipment and supplies falling into U.S. hands. Engagements with the enemy continued, but only on a sporadic basis as it appeared the enemy had given up all hope

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of defending his base and had pulled back into Northern Tay Ninh Province and across the Cambodian border.

On the 12th, over 4,000 grenades were discovered in a steel underground bunker. An additional 358 tons of rice were discovered on the 13th. The following day, 2/18th Inf - going into a new area in the northwest - encountered heavy automatic weapons fire and called in air strikes, but the results were unknown. Three UH-1D helicopters supporting the LZ were shot down by the automatic weapons fire, but all were recovered. ^{94/} The same day, on the 15th, the 25th Division, supported by a mechanized battalion, commenced a thrust to the north along Highway 4 toward Katum, an area where no U.S. forces had been before. In the meantime, the 1st Infantry Division was pushing north from Dau Tieng trying to root out the enemy and make them fight. ^{95/}

On 16 November, 620 more tons of rice and 17 tons of salt were captured and 15 VC bodies were discovered which were believed to have been killed by artillery and air during the LZ prep of the 15th. Another major enemy base camp was captured on the 17th and, the following day, 44 VC bodies, ^{96/} about a week old, were unearthed from graves.

In various supply caches captured during this week, the Army destroyed 53 CBU-bomblets, five 20-pound bombs and four 500-pounders, testifying to the use the VC frequently make of dud ordnance. Until the end of the operation, numerous camps and bases continued to be found and destroyed by the sweeping infantry units. ^{97/}

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At 2150 hours on the 22nd of November, the Viet Cong staged another mortar attack - this time against the Soui Da Special Forces Camp. Three personnel were wounded by the estimated 20 rounds of 81/82mm which missed 98/ the camp and landed in an artillery area.

Operation ATTLEBORO terminated at 2400 hours, 25 November, but the VC managed to get in the last word. Fifteen minutes before the operation terminated, 30 rounds of mortar fire began falling on the base camp at Dau Tieng, wounding 44. The Viet Cong might have been defeated, but they had by no means been rendered impotent. A USAF FAC immediately took to the air and an AC-47 spotted the tube flashes and fired in suppression. Artillery 99/ and friendly mortars also replied - all with unknown results.

11. SUMMARY

During the two and a half months Operation ATTLEBORO was in being, 1,106 Viet Cong were confirmed killed in action by body count. Hundreds more dead were estimated carried away from the battlefields, and additional hundreds may have been killed in the numerous B-52 strikes. In addition to these losses, 44 confirmed VC/NVA were captured. Friendly losses were relatively low for an operation of this magnitude, with 115 KIA and 494 WIA. Enormous quantities of enemy supplies were captured or destroyed, including 100/ over 2,000 tons of rice - the largest haul of the war to date.

The role of airpower in Operation ATTLEBORO was outstanding, although KBA would be impossible to compute with any accuracy. From 1 to 25 November 1966, a total of 1,629 strike sorties, including 485 immediates, were flown,

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expending 11,757.3 tons of ordnance. 101/

At the MACV Commander's Conference at Nha Trang on 20 November, air was highly praised. In one case, it was mentioned that 30 enemy were found dead in a trench - all without wounds - killed by bomb concussion. In another instance, a bomb made a direct hit on a battalion command post, 102/ cutting all communications and killing 13.

In 17 days, 225 B-52 sorties were flown and 4,059 tons of bombs were delivered by these aircraft. Maj. Gen. Weyland, CG, IIFV, said: 103/

"We had wonderful luck with the B-52 strikes... used them like close air support or long range artillery. A B-52 strike severely damaged COSVN headquarters and another landed directly on the 9th Division's headquarters. These strikes severely disrupted the enemy's command chain."

Tactical airlift also played a tremendous, if not quite so spectacular a role in Operation ATTLEBORO. C-123 Providers flew 2,712 sorties, while the C-130 Hercules contributed an additional 602 sorties. These aircraft transported 8,902 tons of cargo and 11,403 passengers, for a grand total of 10,270 tons of cargo and passengers airlifted between 18 October and 26 November. These figures included both scheduled and special missions. 104/

In summation, there can be no doubt that airpower was truly one of the outstanding contributors to the success achieved by Operation ATTLEBORO. Tactical Air supported the ground forces constantly, from LZ preps to bombing the VC egress routes once the massed firepower of air-artillery-infantry had shattered their resistance. Air repeatedly played a key role

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in close air support during troop contacts and could rightly claim a large share of the KIA's attributed to these actions.

Tactical airlift responded immediately to the need for transporting tremendous quantities of troops and supplies, being virtually the only means available to accomplish this task under such a limited time factor.

Repeated B-52 sorties were also a key factor in breaking the enemy's resistance and, although only a minimal evaluation of their success has been received, it is evident these aircraft were a major contribution to the success of the operation.

Military intelligence reports during the period 24 November-11 December tended to confirm the success achieved by the allied operations in War Zone C. According to a report of 8 December, casualties sustained by the VC during Operation ATTLEBORO totaled 2,130 KIA (including 1,096 killed by bombs), 618 seriously wounded, 269 slightly wounded and 216 captured or missing. 105/

The COSVN headquarters was reportedly hit by B-52 strikes (10th, 14th and 15th of November), destroying combined elements composed of five sections of COSVN. During these attacks, Lt. Gen. Lu, Deputy Chief of the Research Section of COSVN, was seriously wounded. These same strikes are credited as having killed four COSVN cadre members and destroying tremendous quantities of documents, supplies and equipment - including typewriters, printing presses, mimeograph machines, 98 Chicom radios, large quantities of spare parts, maps, and currency consisting of VN\$ 15 million and

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US\$ 300,000. As of 18 November, a total of four battalion commanders and five company commanders were also reported killed as a result of the operation. 106/

If these reports are true, the overall enemy casualties for Operation ATTLEBORO were in excess of 3,000 personnel, with severe damage being inflicted upon enemy leadership, facilities and supplies. 107/

[REDACTED]

FOOTNOTES

(Documents as noted provided in one copy to AFCHO and in DTEC file copy.)

1. (S) CHECO Report, Battle of Binh Gia, 1 Jul 65.
2. (S) WAIS #45, Vol II, 14 Nov 66. (Doc 1)
3. (S) CHECO Report, Operation BIRMINGHAM, 29 Jun 66.
4. (C) CHECO Report, Operation EL PASO, 30 Nov 66.
5. (S) Excerpts, MACV Commanders Conference, 20 Nov 66. (Doc 2)
6. (C) Combat Reports, Air Sorties - Operation ATTLEBORO, TACC, 1 Oct-26 Nov 66. (Doc 3)
7. (S) Excerpts, MACV Commanders Conference, 20 Nov 66. (Doc 2)
8. (C) Intell. Report, PERINTREP #34, II Field Forces, Vietnam, 30 Oct-6 Nov 66.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. (C) Compendium, KBA from MACV Daily Journal, 28 Oct 66. (Doc 4)
12. (C) Intell. Report, INTSUM #239, II Field Forces, Vietnam, 8 Nov 66, p. 22.
13. (C) Daily Journal, MACV, 28 Oct 66. (Doc 4)
14. (C) After-Action Report, III Corps Mike Force, 19 Nov 66. (Doc 5)
15. (C) Interview, Capt. Bruce/Mr. Sams with Lt. Connelly, 19TASS, 8 Nov 66. (Doc 6)
16. (C) After-Action Report, III Corps Mike Force, 19 Nov 66. (Doc 5)
17. (C) Compendium, TACC Scramble/Divert Log, 3 Nov 66. (Doc 7)
18. (C) After-Action Report, III Corps Mike Force, 19 Nov 66. (Doc 5)
19. (C) Daily Journal, MACV, 3 Nov 66. (Doc 4)
20. Ibid.
21. (C) Combat Reports, Air Sorties - Operation ATTLEBORO, TACC, 1 Oct-26 Nov 66. (Doc 3)

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22. (C) Daily Journal, MACV, 4 Nov 66. (Doc 4)
23. (C) Intell. Report, INTSUM #235, II Field Forces, Vietnam, 4 Nov 66, p. 19.
24. Ibid.
25. (C) Daily Journal, MACV, 4 Nov 66. (Doc 4)
26. (C) After-Action Report, III Corps Mike Force, 19 Nov 66. (Doc 5)
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid.
30. (C) Interview, Capt. Bruce/Mr. Sams with Lt. Connelly, 19TASS, 8 Nov 66. (Doc 6)
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
33. (C) Log, TACC Scramble/Divert, 5 Nov 66.
34. (C) Report, Daily Combat Air Activities, 7AF, 5 Nov 66.
35. (C) After-Action Report, III Corps Mike Force, 19 Nov 66. (Doc 5)
36. (C) Interview, Capt. Bruce/Mr. Sams with Lt. Connelly, 19TASS, 8 Nov 66. (Doc 6)
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid.
39. (C) After-Action Report, III Corps Mike Force, 19 Nov 66. (Doc 5)
40. (C) Interview, Capt. Bruce/Mr. Sams with Lt. Connelly, 19TASS, 8 Nov 66. (Doc 6)
41. Ibid.
42. (C) Excerpts, III DASC Log. (Doc 8)
43. (U) Citation, Silver Star Recommendation for Lt. Connelly, prepared by 19TASS. (Doc 9)

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- 44. (C) Compendium, MACV Journal & After-Action Report, III Corps Mike Force, 19 Nov 66. (Docs 4-5)
- 45. (C) Daily Journal, MACV, 5 Nov 66. (Doc 4)
- 46. (U) Article, "Six-Hour 'Mad Minute'!", Army Digest, Feb 67, pp. 40-41. (Doc 10)
- 47. (C) Daily Journal MACV, 5 Nov 66. (Doc 4)
- 48. (C) Intell. Report, PERINTREP #34, II Field Forces, Vietnam, 30 Oct-6 Nov 66, p. 2.
- 49. (C) Daily Journal, MACV, 5-6 Nov 66. (Doc 4)
- 50. (S) Excerpts, MACV Commanders Conference, 20 Nov 66. (Doc 2)
- 51. (C) Daily Journal, MACV, 5 Nov 66. (Doc 4)
- 52. (C) Combat Reports, Air Sorties - Operation ATTLEBORO, TACC, 1 Oct-26 Nov 66. (Doc 3)
- 53. (C) Daily Journal, MACV, 6 Nov 66. (Doc 4)
- 54. (C) Excerpts, III DASC Log & MACV Journal. (Doc 8)
- 55. Ibid.
- 56. (C) Log, III DASC. (Doc 8)
- 57. (C) Log, TACC Scramble/Divert, 6 Nov 66.
- 58. (C) Interview, Capt. Bruce with Capt. Wetzell, FAC 1st Inf Div, 29 Nov 66. (Doc 11)
- 59. Ibid.
- 60. Ibid.
- 61. Ibid.
- 62. (C) Interview, Capt. Bruce/Mr. Sams with Lt. Backus, 416TFS, 8 Nov 66. (Doc 12)
- 63. Ibid.
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- 66. (U) News Release, Hq 7AF, 7 Nov 66. (Doc 13)
- 67. (C) Interview, Capt. Bruce with Capt. Phillips, FAC 2d Bde, 1st Inf Div, 30 Nov 66. (Doc 14)
- 68. (C) Interview, Capt. Bruce with Capt. Wetzel, FAC 1st Inf Div, 29 Nov 66. (Doc 11)
- 69. (C) Log, TACC Scramble/Divert, 6 Nov 66.
- 70. (C) Daily Journal, MACV, 6 Nov 66. (Doc 4)
- 71. (C) Compendium, Daily Journals, MACV, 3-8 Nov 66.
- 72. (C) Daily Journal, MACV, 7 Nov 66. (Doc 4)
- 73. (C) Interview, Capt. Bruce with Capt. Wetzel, FAC 1st Inf Div, 29 Nov 66. (Doc 11)
- 74. Ibid.
- 75. (C) Intell. Report, PERINTREP #35, II Field Forces, Vietnam, 7-13 Nov 66.
- 76. (C) Compendium, MACV Journal & TACC Scramble/Divert Log. (Doc 4)
- 77. (C) Intell. Report, PERINTREP #35, II Field Forces, Vietnam, 7-13 Nov 66; TACC Scramble/Divert Log.
- 78. (C) Interview, Capt. Bruce with Capt. Wetzel, FAC 1st Inf Div, 29 Nov 66. (Doc 11)
- 79. (C) Intell. Report, PERINTREP #35, II Field Forces, Vietnam, 7-13 Nov 66.
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- 81. Ibid.
- 82. (C) Interview, Capt. Bruce with Capt. Phillips, FAC 2d Bde, 1st Inf Div, 30 Nov 66. (Doc 14)
- 83. (C) Daily Journal, MACV, 8-9 Nov 66. (Doc 4)
- 84. (C) Combat Reports, Air Sorties - Operation ATTLEBORO, TACC, 1 Oct-26 Nov 66. (Doc 3)
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- 90. (C) Compendium, MACV Journal & Intell. Summary, IIFFV. (Doc 4)
- 91. (C) Daily Journal, MACV, 11 Nov 66. (Doc 4)
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- 93. (C) Report, Daily Combat Air Activities, 7AF, 12 Nov 66.
- 94. (C) Daily Journal, MACV, 12-13 Nov 66. (Doc 4)
- 95. (S) Excerpts, MACV Commanders Conference, 20 Nov 66. (Doc 2)
- 96. (C) Excerpts, MACV Journal & Intell. Summaries, IIFFV, 15-17 Nov 66. (Doc 4)
- 97. (C) Intell. Report, PERINTREP #36, II Field Forces, Vietnam, 14-20 Nov 66.
- 98. (C) Daily Journal, MACV, 22 Nov 66. (Doc 4)
- 99. (C) Daily Journal, MACV, 26 Nov 66. (Doc 4)
- 100. (C) Operations Reports, COMUSMACV JOPREP & OPREP 4's. (Doc 15)
- 101. (C) Combat Reports, Air Sorties - Operation ATTLEBORO, TACC, 1 Oct-26 Nov 66. (Doc 3)
- 102. (S) Excerpts, MACV Commanders Conference, 20 Nov 66. (Doc 2)
- 103. (C) Combat Reports, Air Sorties - Operation ATTLEBORO, TACC, 1 Oct-26 Nov 66. (Doc 3)
- 104. (C) Report, Airlift in Operation ATTLEBORO, 18 Oct-26 Nov 66. (Doc 16)
- 105. (C) Intell. Report, 149th MIGp, COMUSMACV (DD1396), 6-026-1943-66, dtd 14 Dec 66. (Doc 17)
- 106. Ibid.
- 107. Ibid.

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APPENDIX I

FINAL RESULTS OF OPERATION ATTLEBORO

Sources: USMACV/JOPREP/DAILY SITREP 328-66; OPREP 4, 241601Z-251600Z
November 1966.

A - FRIENDLY LOSSES

1. Personnel: 115 KIA; 494 WIA
2. Equipment:
 - a. Destroyed: 1 aircraft
2 trucks
 - b. Damaged : 1 truck

B - ENEMY LOSSES

1. Personnel: 1106 VC/NVA KIA; 115 VC/NVA Captured; 60 VC Suspects Detained.
2. Supplies and Equipment:
 - a. Destroyed: 300 bldgs, 502 bunkers, 92 tunnels, 1 rice silo, 9 base camps, 1 claymore factory, 37 caves, 1 bridge, 12 sampans, 25 oxcarts.

1,566 rounds small arms ammo, 4 M79 rounds, 33 60mm mortar rounds, 1 81mm mortar round, 5 105mm rounds, 2 155mm rounds, 117 grenades, 15 rifle grenades, 3 claymore mines, 12 anti-tank mines, 15 anti-personnel mines, 49 booby traps.

10-gal can TNT, 6 1-lb blocks TNT, 2 blasting caps, 55 CBU, 5 20-lb bombs, 1 100-lb bomb, 2 250-lb bombs, 4 500-lb bombs.

1,263.4 tons rice, 800 lbs wheat, 7,955 lbs fish, 40 lg bags fish, 11.4 tons salt, 250 lbs canned food, 45 cans US C-rations, 35 chickens/ducks, 1 ton beans.

1,050 lb fertilizer, 460 lbs clothing, 8 5-lb bags cement, 440 gal tar, 500 gal gasoline, 30 gal kerosene, 9,000 lbs tobacco, 50 picks, 61 shovels, 11 bicycles, 1 outboard motor, 10 beds.

[REDACTED]

5 storehouses, 2 trucks, 1 rice processor, 1 55-gal drum C/S, 176 gals acid, 2 arc welders, 23 rifle stocks, 1 set scales, 1 rice mill, 2 tool boxes, 400' electric wire, 1 air pump, 4 water buffalo.

b. Captured: 128 small arms, 19 crew-served weapons, 2 M79 grenade launchers, 1 flare pistol, 1 50-cal MG barrel, 2 12.7mm hvy MG barrels, 5 hvy MG mount/carriers, 5 bipods for 82mm mortar, 5,142 rounds small arms, 250 .50-cal rounds, 34 M79 rounds, 30 60mm rounds, 5 82mm mortar rounds, 9 RPG-2 rockets, 13 unk type rockets, 514 claymore mines, 12,288 hand grenades, 3,176 fragmentation grenades, 5,685 rifle grenades, 1,299 gas grenades, 825 large HE grenades, 2,000 WP grenades, 2 handmade grenades, 5 flares, 5 anti-tank mines, 6 anti-personnel mines, 11 floating water mines, 1,075 lbs explosives, 1,000 blasting caps, 3,000 booby trap igniters, 752 bangalore torpedoes, 500 fusing devices, 80 grenade launchers, 500 rifle grenade adapters, 400 claymore mine stands.

1,121 tons rice, 15 tons peanuts, 600 gals cooking oil.

123 lbs documents, 1 CW radio, 1 radio tmtr, 1 port military radio, 3 transistor radios, 1 sampan engine, 1 bugle, 1,500 ammo pouches, 500 back packs, 151 bicycles, 2 tons corr sheet metal, 68 bolts cloth, 50 bottles medicine, 380 vials medicine, 1,000 unk type pills, 15 lbs sulfa drugs, 150 lbs Epsom salts, 2 lbs misc medical supplies, 1 large medical kit, 33 110-lb bags cement, 125 lbs clothing, 200 Pioneer tools, 98 batteries, 330 shovels, 10 green uniforms, 6 medical uniforms, 150 lbs soap, 1,040 meters WD-1 wire, 160 gals POL, 2 crosscut saws, 321 machetes, 1 VC flag, 1 chemical agent treatment kit, 1 1/4-ton trailer, 4 gas masks, 1 farm tractor, 1 pig, 1 set scales, 1 pr binoculars, 2 refrigerators, asstd machine parts/tools, 29 motorcycle tires, 10 inner tubes, 125 gals tar, 45 qts paint, 8 tire rims, misc motorcycle parts.

[REDACTED]

APPENDIX II

CHRONOLOGY OF ATTLEBORO
(Numbers refer to Map, Fig. 6.)

- 26 Sep: Large rice storage (279 tons) captured. #1
- 19 Oct: 272nd VC Regiment moves south from Michelin Plantation. Efforts redoubled and sweep area expanded for ATTLEBORO.
- 31 Oct: Large rice storage (843 tons) captured. #2
- 2 Nov: Intelligence reports attack imminent against Soui Da Special Forces Camp. #3
Mike Force alerted and moved to Soui Da.
- 3 Nov: Mike Force exchanges fire with enemy company at 1220H. #4
19th Lt Inf Bde goes into two LZ's. #5
- 4 Nov: Soui Cau outpost attacked by 2nd Bn, 272nd VC Regmt between 0030-0515H. #6
Tay Ninh Base Camp receives 150 mortar rounds from 0208-0230, 0540-0550H. #7
196th Lt Inf Bde makes heavy contact. #8
Mike Force discovers base camp and is heavily engaged. #9
- 5 Nov: Mike Force overrun between 0730-1020H. #9
Mike Force heavily supported by air strikes; USSF estimates 400 KBA. 196th Lt Inf Bde in heavy contact all day. #10
Unident. convoy spotted out of Cambodia for Go Dau Ha.
- 6 Nov: Mike Force Company takes light casualties from VC Platoon. #11
2/28th Inf enters LZ in a.m. with heavy air support.
Lt Backus (FAC) shot down.
Two large VC base camps captured. #12
Two large convoys spotted near Cambodian border.
- 7 Nov: 70 VC bodies discovered believed result of artillery fire of previous night; numerous small contacts and base camps discovered; 54 more VC bodies found. #13
- 8 Nov: Commander of 3/3/101st NVA Regmt captured.
1/28th Inf attacked in LZ by 2/272nd VC and 1/101st NVA. #14
2/16th Inf patrol finds 22 VC bodies in fresh graves.
C/2/28th Inf discovers a major base and tunnel complex; captures large quantities of arms, ammo and supplies. #15
1/28th Inf finds documents and Cambodian and Laotian currency.

- [REDACTED]
- 9 Nov: 2/28th Inf finds 85 VC bodies in tunnel; 10 more in area; uncovers large base camp. #16
1/16th Inf discovers heavily fortified base camp containing money, fresh blood trails and bandages. Camp destroyed later by airstrikes.
- 10 Nov: C/2/16th Inf discovers/destroys base camp of 101st NVA Regmt. LZ prep uncovers large tunnel complex and fortifications. #17
Many KBA in prep airstrikes.
- 11 Nov: 1/16th Inf finds 2 warehouses, 1 truck destroyed by previous airstrikes.
A/1/18th Inf discovers and destroys base camp. #18
B/2/16th Inf finds another base camp with two warehouses and several bunkers; airstrikes called in to destroy. #19
- 12 Nov: Tay Ninh Base Camp receives 84 rounds of 81mm mortar between 0200-0220H. #8
Dau Tieng Airfield hit by 65 rounds of 82mm mortar. #20
- 13 Nov: B/1/26th Inf captures 358 tons of rice. #21
- 14 Nov: C/4/31st Inf fired on from caves on side of Tay Ninh Mt. #22
Airstrikes brought in and 30 VC est. KBA.
- 15 Nov: 2/18th Inf provided heavy artillery support and airstrikes while receiving heavy fire in LZ; 3 helicopters shot down in this LZ. #23
- 16 Nov: 1/26th Inf discovers 400 tons rice; captures 220 more tons of rice and 17 tons of salt nearby. #24
Recon/2/18th Inf discovers base camp with 15 VC KIA caused by LZ prep of previous day. #18
2/18th Inf contacted VC platoon-size element. #25
- 17 Nov: B/2/28th Inf discovers major base camp. #26
- 18 Nov: 2/1st Inf engages force of 20 VC. #27
B/2/28th Inf discovers 24 VC graves containing 44 bodies.
2/503d Inf encounters VC platoon force. #28
- 22 Nov: Soui Da SF Camp hit by 20 rounds of 81/82mm mortar fire. #3
- 25 Nov: Dau Tieng mortared in late evening with 30 rounds. #20

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APPENDIX III

STRIKE SORTIES - OPERATION ATTLEBORO
(Source: TACC Combat Reports)

<u>DATE</u> <u>1966</u>	<u>PREPLANNED</u> <u>SORTIES</u>	<u>IMMEDIATE</u> <u>SORTIES</u>	<u>SKY SPOT</u> <u>SORTIES</u>	<u>B-52</u> <u>SORTIES</u>	<u>B-52 ORDNANCE</u> <u>(Tons)</u>
4 Oct	3	0	0	0	0
5 Oct	6	0	0	0	0
6 Oct	9	0	0	0	0
7 Oct	3	0	0	0	0
8 Oct	3	0	0	0	0
9 Oct	3	0	0	0	0
10 Oct	6	0	0	0	0
11 Oct	9	2	0	0	0
12 Oct	14	0	0	0	0
13 Oct	3	0	0	0	0
14 Oct	6	0	0	0	0
15 Oct	3	0	0	0	0
16 Oct	3	0	0	0	0
17 Oct	9	0	0	0	0
18 Oct	10	0	4	0	0
19 Oct	8	0	0	0	0
20 Oct	9	0	0	0	0
21 Oct	3	0	0	0	0
22 Oct	3	0	0	0	0
23 Oct	0	0	0	0	0
24 Oct	0	0	0	0	0
25 Oct	0	0	2	0	0
26 Oct	0	0	0	0	0
27 Oct	3	0	0	0	0
28 Oct	6	0	0	0	0
29 Oct	6	0	0	0	0
30 Oct	0	0	2	0	0
31 Oct	6	0	0	0	0
1 Nov	6	0	2	0	0
2 Nov	5	3	0	0	0
3 Nov	11	19	6	0	0
4 Nov	6	41	0	0	0
5 Nov	16	47	0	0	0
6 Nov	14	69	6	0	0
7 Nov	46	20	4	0	0
8 Nov	18	52	8	12	216
9 Nov	27	8	2	15	270
10 Nov	46	29	4	21	387
11 Nov	45	14	12	9	162
12 Nov	49	6	17	12	216
13 Nov	19	19	6	18	324

STRIKE SORTIES - OPERATION ATTLEBORO
(Continued)

<u>DATE</u> <u>1966</u>	<u>PREPLANNED</u> <u>SORTIES</u>	<u>IMMEDIATE</u> <u>SORTIES</u>	<u>SKY SPOT</u> <u>SORTIES</u>	<u>B-52</u> <u>SORTIES</u>	<u>B-52 ORDNANCE</u> <u>(Tons)</u>
14 Nov	51	11	6	15	270
15 Nov	68	24	11	9	162
16 Nov	49	37	6	9	162
17 Nov	60	8	4	15	270
18 Nov	52	15	4	15	270
19 Nov	59	10	14	12	216
20 Nov	54	17	18	12	216
21 Nov	65	10	11	21	378
22 Nov	48	16	4	12	216
23 Nov	47	4	12	9	162
24 Nov	26	4	8	0	0
25 Nov	11	0	6	9	162
26 Nov	<u>8</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL	1,040	485	183	225	4,059

Tonnage for Tactical Sorties = 11,757.3 tons

AIRLIFT SUPPORT - OPERATION ATTLEBORO

<u>C-123</u> <u>Sorties</u>	<u>C-130</u> <u>Sorties</u>	<u>Tons</u> <u>Airlifted</u>	<u>Passengers</u> <u>Airlifted</u>	<u>Total Tonnage</u> <u>Airlifted</u>
2,712	602	8,902	11,403	10,270

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GLOSSARY AND EXPLANATION OF TERMS

AO	Area of operation(s)
ARVN	Army of the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam)
Bde	Brigade
Bn	Battalion
CAS	Close air support
CBU	Cluster bomb unit
CG	Commanding General
Charlie	Nickname for Viet Cong
Chicom	Chinese Communist
China Boy	Nickname for Mike Force Company
Claymore	Shaped charge, anti-personnel mine
COSVN	Central Office, South Vietnam (VC control)
Div	Division
FAC	Forward air controller
FFV	Field Forces, Vietnam (e.g. IFFV, IIFFV, etc.)
High drag	Bomb designed for low-level delivery; fin-equipped to reduce velocity of fall
Inf	Infantry
KBA	Killed by air (no longer officially recorded)
KIA	Killed in action
Lt Inf Bde	Light Infantry Brigade
LZ	Landing Zone
Med-evac	Medical evacuation
MIA	Missing in action
Mike Force	Nung Chinese mercenary soldiers
NLF	National Liberation Front (political arm of COSVN)
NVA	North Vietnamese Army
OPCON	Operation control
Prep	Preparation
Pre-plan	A pre-planned sortie
Regmt	Regiment
SF	Special Forces (also USSF)

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TAC-E	Tactical emergency airlift
TASS	Tactical air support squadron
Unit Designation	i.e. C/1/2nd Inf = "C" Company, 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment
USAF	U.S. Air Force
USSF	U.S. Special Forces
VC	Viet Cong
WIA	Wounded in action

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